

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

July 15, 2003

7:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Pinard.

A moment of silent prayer is observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Guinta, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard, O’Neil,
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith and Forest.

Absent: Alderman Thibault

Mayor Baines stated before we begin the meeting, somebody just slipped me this note that tonight is our dear friend Ralph Garst’s birthday. I’m sure Ralph is watching at home, our Police Commissioner. On behalf of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, Ralph, we’d like to wish you a very happy birthday.

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

Victoria Chapman, 485 Shasta Street, stated I’m here tonight as a Commissioner for the Elderly Services Department. I would like to read a letter that the Commissioners have written as an objection to the consolidation of the Department of Elderly Services with the Health Department. This letter has been mailed to all the Aldermen and to the Mayor’s office as well.

Dear Members of the Board:

The Elderly Services Commission met on July 1, 2003 and has taken a position on the consolidation of Elderly Services within the Health Department. It is the recommendation of this Commission that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen vote against the Ordinance creating the new Department of Health and Community Services. The Elderly Services Department should remain independent from the Health Department as the consolidation is not a merger of equals and the focus of health is predominant. The Elderly Services Department is a social service department. The main focus is socialization. As stated in Section 3.01 in the City Charter, the Aldermen shall detail in any ordinance passed the scope and duties of any department and shall have the power to consolidate similar functions performed by several departments in one or more departments. These departments are not similar. During the budget process the Health Department was going to have to cut from a non-public health source. This presents a risk factor to losing control of the budget to a larger department with a different mandate. According to the information provided at the Bills on Second Reading, there are no demonstrated cost savings to this consolidation. The voice of the elderly will be lost in this consolidation. Why are we building a new senior center? It is the desire of this Commission that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen vote against this consolidation. We believe that cooperation and coordination is more effective than consolidation.

Ira Voyer, Chairman

Connie Farr, Secretary

Victoria Chapman

Jeffrey Bolduc

Maryanne Taunton, MD

Jeff Kassel, 22 Appleton Street, stated I'm here tonight to introduce myself not so much to you but to the people that may be watching this as a candidate for Mayor of this City. I want to tell everybody that I am really running for this office not out of any particular political ambition, I'm running out of financial self preservation and I think I reflect the motive of a lot of people that have watched taxes rise in this city 20 percent over the last four years. I'm not only running against Mayor Baines, I'm running against Carlos Gonzalez. Carlos Gonzalez has supported a lot of the huge projects that are contributing to the tax increases in this City. If you are a citizen of this City that's renting or paying property taxes, you should consider candidates other than the ones that you have been electing. There are ten aldermen on this Board that have voted for a lot of these big projects, the latest of which is the stadium. So we have \$105 million of renovations going into the schools, some of that is not necessary. These Aldermen are known to all of you but in case you forgotten their names, I'll mention a few of them. Dan O'Neil, Mr. Lopez, Betsi DeVries, Frank Guinta, Mary Sysyn. These people have bonded or will bond a quarter of a billion dollars in the last four years. Mr. Guinta is new to this Board so he's a new coming big spender. When the election rolls around I wish you would consider Jeff Kassel for Mayor and I hope you consider some other aldermen other than the names that I noted.

Barbara Haines, 509 Lake Avenue, stated I come here tonight way down and crushed by the oppression of a matter of great concern to all God fearing people of Manchester. I would like to ask a quick question. How many of the Aldermen and Mayor know that the oral contraceptive pill is an abortifacient? What I would like to say is that \$8,000 of our City budget goes to the teen clinic that is located at the YWCA. Recently I went to the teen clinic

to see for myself where our tax money goes. I walked in the waiting room of the teen clinic and sat down next to a basket of condoms. I talked with the director of the teen clinic and asked her some questions. I found out that they dispense the birth control pills Deprovera and the Patch. She denied that the oral contraceptives are abortifacient, but I understand that they are. I was informed that all oral contraceptives are abortifacient by a nurse in a pregnancy crisis-training center. Our tax money is going to pay for the killing innocent children, innocent babies. Some of the most vulnerable of our neighbors in Manchester. I request that our rights be honored, that the Christians in the City would not have to pay taxes to kill babies, which is against our religious beliefs. He pled the cause that inflicted in needy, then it was well. Is that not what it means to know he declares the Lord. But your eyes and your heart are intent only on your dishonest gain and on shedding innocent blood and on practicing oppression and extortion. Jeremiah 22:16-17.

Pat Barss, Manchester, I'm actually here to thank this Board of Mayor and Aldermen for your recent support on July 1st. Girls, Inc. of the Greater Manchester region got a letter from Manchester Housing and Redevelopment Authority asking us to vacate the space that they so desperately needed because of their programs expanding. And though we are really grateful to the Manchester Housing Authority for the support they've given us the last three years we still need some support from this Board and the Mayor. We have had an outpouring of support from the community and I wanted to give you an update that not only the first call was to the Mayor's office and we got a lot of support and encouragement that they wouldn't let Girls, Inc. disappear from Manchester, but the Red Cross called us and MCRC, Joe Kelly Levasseur has offered us space, St. Augustan Church and St. Anne's Church, Father John from both of those, and some at Manchester Police Department have been offering support. Yo Gallery we're looking at tomorrow. I understand that it is closing unfortunately. But there are several other options that are available to us and we're in a crisis mode. We have to be out by August 15th and we are looking at all of these buildings and we'll be paying rent for the first time we think in three years and maybe coming back to the Board for some emergency funding. We are doing some fundraisers that I hope some of you will help us with. We've created a Halfway to St. Patrick's Day, Travel Anywhere has donated a trip to Ireland that we will raffle off, we're doing this emergency fundraiser, it will be at the Executive Courtyard, they are hosting it for just the cost of food. We have the Spain Brothers playing, and so we'll be doing this Halfway to St. Patrick's Day on September 26th so we'll be letting you all know about that. I know some of you are Irish, I think. Anyway, we wanted to thank you for your support and we'll be looking for continued support, and if you have any ideas of any other buildings or places that are licensable...

Mayor Baines stated if somebody was sitting at home, a landlord or something was interested in helping you, how would they contact you.

Ms. Barss answered they would call me. I am the Regional Director for Manchester at our Manchester location, the number is 623-1117.

Rita O'Connor, 23 Country Club Drive, stated thank you all for our Senior Center. Now we'd like a little more help. As I am quoting from the Senior Matters of the Elliot Hospital paper, it states here that everyone requires a different amount and type of social interaction to feel content. However, it is important to continue to socialize as we age to maintain our health and well being for both the mind and the body. We'd like not to be merged with the Health Department. We'd like to stay on as we are with our own Senior Center and I will quote you we do pay for our own health care out of our own pockets and it's close to \$200 a month which provides us with our own doctors and our own everything. Nothing the Health Department could give us we don't already have, and I'm sure that you like us would only want to go to your own doctors, you wouldn't want to have anybody but them. If the budget gets cut, Fred Rusczek has already said he would have to cut from a non-medical issue, therefore, the seniors would lose out. We'd lose our voice; we'd lose our services since the elderly services are non-medical. With the closing of the eastside center this year, the City will be saving thousands of dollars. We need the adult time to socialize. We can't put a price tag on that. With Catholic Medical Center and Elliot Hospitals they provide us with free blood pressure screenings, free exercise classes, free everything. I will close with saying that the Elderly Services of Manchester are the seniors of Manchester. Please keep us that way.

James Chan, 705 Beech Street, stated I just have a few comments regarding the City in the process of determining whether the health club should take over the UNH building. According to the *Union Leader* you have here "new jobs hinge on building purchase", and the other one is, "new jobs". However, you must realize it sounds great, 145 jobs, 39 full-time, 106 part-time. Health club jobs are dead-end jobs. These are service jobs, \$8.00 to \$10.00, so all of you know this is a great political crook saying that you have 145 jobs available. I suggest that the City should hang on to the piece of land and wait until you have a fairly good industrial complex coming in there.

Keith Hirschmann, 296 Dunbarton Road, stated I appear before you tonight as a Charter Commissioner. I was not available to speak to you during the next meeting, the regular meet of the Board, so I had to come to the special meeting and say this. The Charter revision that's being forwarded to the voters is a consensus of the Commissioners which was six or seven months of hard work and it is going to save the taxpayers money as well as run government efficiently. What I'm asking you as government is to send out notices to anyone that does sign up for public office, or anyone that has signed up for public office yesterday, to please send out a notice to those people that they may not in fact get health benefits and their stipends, or their salary, could be capped at \$5,000 for an alderman, \$2,000 for a school board member. So I'd like everyone that's running for public office to know the benefits that they would receive or that they wouldn't receive in fairness and open government. Please send out those notices to anyone signing up for government that should this Charter pass, which is a taxpayer friendly Charter, that health benefits would go away upon the

swearing of the next board. I will switch hats now and just to speak to you as a former alderman of the Board and someone that has signed up for a fourth term, I would like to win a term. I took an important vote a few years back not to consolidate the Elderly Services into any department and the Charter Commission took a very important unanimous vote to keep the commission that oversees the Elderly Services because those are integral people that oversee our elderly. I'm going to campaign for alderman and I'm asking you all to watch out for our seniors. Do not consolidate them with a department that's out chasing West Nile Virus and whatever else and I want to thank you and I'll see you soon.

Leo Pepino, 73 Walnut Street, Charter Commissioner, I'm only going to address one part of the Charter. Section 6.04 Budget Adoptions, Item C, first line. One night on TV I watched this Board debate for about an hour. Pink slips for the teachers, School Board can't hire they got their budget, and you people went on and on and on and on and one of the things was what can we do about it? How can we stop that? Your Honor you're smiling. I'm giving you part of my two minutes. So I looked at that and we put that in the Charter. If you look at Section 6.04, Item C, "The Board of Mayor and Aldermen shall adopt a budget on or before the first Tuesday in April of fiscal year currently ending." No more pink slips, they can hire teachers when they want, and somebody told me this here when we passed this for the first time, this is what they said. They said this piece right here is one of the best things for education the City has ever passed. They couldn't do any better and the most important thing is it doesn't cost a nickel. So I'm asking this Board to support this. If you support this, you're supporting education. Now, the majority supported this in the Charter, which Your Honor said we didn't do a pretty good job. The minority voted against this, and when they voted against this, this is what we said. They're opposing the schools. That's all I'm saying. Read this first line, your pink slips are gone, your teachers will be hired when they want to be hired, and it all takes one sentence to take care of the whole thing. So I'm asking you people to support this Charter and we need the education. This will be the only thing you can ever do for the City of Manchester and the School Department that doesn't cost five cents.

Kathy Philbert, 176 Laurel Street, stated I'd like to thank you for the opportunity given to me again tonight. My request is that this Board look closely at the services that are contracted out in this community. They are far from cost effective. As you recall, last October I was here asking for your help in getting Laurel Street project completed and the new lights installed. Well they're finally operational as of February 2003. It took exactly twelve months for that block to get completed. My issue tonight however is about recycling or the lack of the contractor to do the job we're paying for. Tomorrow will be the sixth Wednesday that my recycling is in the back street waiting for pick up. It was not picked up on June 18th; I called the Recycling Coordinator at the Highway Department on the 20th and left a detailed message to that fact. It was again not picked up on July 2nd. I was an optimist and left it out there realizing I'm breaking an ordinance, but my husband refuses to carry the recycling and the yard waste back into the yard. So it's been there. Was it missed again? So I called the

Recycling Coordinator on that Thursday and this time I actually spoke to her not to the machine, and I explained how this stuff has now been out there for a month. You can imagine how dry and brittle the branches that were trimmed from our trees are. A real fire hazard. At any rate, she said that she'd try to get it taken care of. Well, I happened to talk to my Alderman last Wednesday and told her that it still hadn't been picked up. Tomorrow is week number six. I'm here tonight so I'm sure that they will be there to pick it up tomorrow. But the point is, many of my neighbors gave up after week four and put the recycling in the regular trash, so we as taxpayers are paying for that same garbage twice. Once to Waste Management for recycling and then again to Waste Management at their transfer station for them to put it in their landfill. Well I've always been an advocate of mandatory recycling, especially for the businesses where you have thousands of bottles that are picked up and just put in the regular trash. But the real point is, just like with the school custodians, just like with other things that we contract for, we're not getting our money's worth from the contractors and it's this Board's responsibility.

Joe Levasseur, 866 Elm Street, stated I just came to talk a little bit about when I was an alderman this issue of consolidation came up of course many times during my tenure as an alderman for two years, consolidating the Elderly with the Youth Services and the Health Department. I know when a big headline comes in the papers it says yea we consolidated and it looks like we're doing all kinds of fancy streamlining in government, but when you look at the costs and you look at the departments, I have no...when I sat there on the Board and I just could not believe that you would even consider putting the youth with the elderly, it just makes absolutely no sense. You've built them a nice building over on the west side and I don't think that doing this for political reasons to make it look like you're consolidating is a very good idea. The elderly should be left on their own. They should have their own management, they should have their health nurses over there, they should have their own facility. I think that for political reasons it may sound good, but I don't think it's a practical reason and I don't believe you guys should continue to stay away from it. There are a lot of other departments that could be consolidated that just doesn't seem to be getting done, but you need to look at some of these other bigger departments where some of the real big money is being spent. And I'd like to talk a little bit about the Charter. I know there is going to be a lot of big beefing about the Charter here tonight, I can see the Minority Report is here, I see that the people on the minority side are here. This Charter is a good charter. It has fine-tuned the Charter we have in place. It's taken away health benefits, it's taking away a lot of the money that the Aldermen can not take away, but it's done in this Charter. It's going to save the taxpayer millions of dollars over the next ten years. And just the fact that Mayor Baines would receive another pension is a good enough reason for me to vote against it. You already have enough money coming in. I just think that we have a good opportunity here folks to streamline government and look at the people who are against this Charter and then it will give you enough of a reason to vote for it.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to take comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented, and on motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk